

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5111

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE

SUBJECT: GDR PREPARATIONS FOR 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF
LIBERATION FROM FASCISM

1. SUMMARY: IN THE LATEST OF A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS SERIES
OF ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS GEARED TO STIMULATE
PRODUCTION AND LEND HISTORICAL LEGITIMACY TO THE SED
REGIME, THE GDR HAS OFFICIALLY SOUNDED THE CALL TO
BEGIN PREPARATIONS FOR THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
LIBERATION FROM FASCISM ON MAY 8, 1975. ALL EAST
GERMAN NEWSPAPERS JANUARY 22 CARRIED A TWO-PAGE
MESSAGE OF EXHORTATION SIGNED BY THE SED CENTRAL
COMMITTEE, THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THE COUNCIL OF STATE,
AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL FRONT
OUTLINING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MAY 8, 1945,
AND CALLING ON ALL GDR CITIZENS TO REDOUBLE THEIR
EFFORTS TO FULFILL THE 1975 PLAN AND PAVE THE WAY
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FOR THE 1XTH SED PARTY CONGRESS IN 1976. END SUMMARY:

2. NO SOONER HAD THE VARIOUS WORKERS COMPETITIONS AND IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGNS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GDR'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY REACHED THEIR CONCLUSION LAST OCTOBER 7, THAN THE NEXT IMPORTANT GDR ANNIVERSARY WAS ANNOUNCED: MAY 8, 1975, THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION FROM FASCISM. IN HIS POLITIBURO REPORT TO THE 13TH MEETING OF THE SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 12, 1974, CENTRAL COMMITTEE FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER REFERRED TO THE "NEW LEVELS OF SOCIALIST COMPETITION AND MANY-SIDED SOCIAL INITIATIVES" THAT WOULD ACCOMPANY PREPARATIONS FOR THE MAY 8TH CELEBRATION, AND ALL HIGH SED OFFICIALS HAVE RITUALISTICALLY REFERRED TO THE EVENT IN RECENT SPEECHES. THE OFFICIAL CALL HAS NOW APPEARED IN A TWO-PAGE BANNER HEADLINED "SUMMONS"(AUFRUF) SIGNED BY THE SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE, THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THE COUNCIL OF STATE, AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL FRONT AND CARRIED IN ALL EAST GERMAN NEWSPAPERS ON JANUARY 22. THE ARTICLE IS EQUALLY DIVIDED BETWEEN AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIBERATION FROM FASCISM BY THE SOVIET ARMY AND A CALL FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION THROUGH COMPETITION GEARED TO THE MAY 8 CELEBRATIONS.

3. SECTION I OF THE JANUARY 22 MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS THE VICTORY OF THE SOVIET ARMY AND THE BIRTH OF THE GDR. AFTER ENUMERATING THE LOSSES SUFFERED BY VARIOUS COUNTRIES DURING WORLD WAR II AND STRESSING THAT THE "LEGACY OF THE DEAD IS OUR OBLIGATION," THE AUTHORS INTERPRET THE WAR AS A NECESSARY RESULT OF GERMAN FASCISM AND FASCISM IN TURN AS THE NECESSARY RESULT OF CAPITALISM IN ITS IMPERIALIST STAGE. MAY 8, 1945, THUS APPEARS AS THE EXPRESSION OF THE SUPERIORITY OF THE SOCIALIST STATE AND SOCIAL ORDER OVER IMPERIALISM, ALTHOUGH THE AUTHORS GRANT THAT THE VICTORY WAS ASSURED BY A BROAD ANTI-FASCIST FRONT THAT INCLUDED THE USA, GREAT BRITAIN, AND FRANCE. AGAIN AND AGAIN THE MESSAGE POINTS OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THE VICTORY OF THE RED ARMY ALONE LED TO THE "GREATEST

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EVENT IN HUMAN HISTORY SINCE RED OCTOBER" AND MADE POSSIBLE THE FOUNDING AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GDR, WHICH HAD AS ITS PREREQUISITE A RENEWAL OF THE CONSCIOUSNESS AND CULTURE OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE UNDER SOCIALISM AND THROUGH UNSHAKEABLE FRIENDSHIP" WITH THE SOVIET UNION. SUCH EMPHASIS ON TIES TO THE SOVIET UNION IS COMMONPLACE IN GDR IDEOLOGICAL TRACTS, BUT IT IS UNUSUALLY STRONG IN THIS MESSAGE WHICH PORTRAYS THE USSR

AS SAVIOR, MIDWIFE, AND BROTHERLY PROTECTOR WHOSE
20 MILLION DEAD MADE POSSIBLE THE TRANSITION FROM THE
HORRORS OF FASCISM TO THE FRUITS OF SOCIALISM.

4. IN SECTION II THE AUTHORS FOCUS ON THREE BASIC
TENETS OF CURRENT GDR FOREIGN POLICY: A RAPID
CONCLUSION OF CSCE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL,
A CONTINUATION OF DETENTE IN SPITE OF INCREASED
ACTIVITY BY REACTIONARY FORCES IN THE WEST, AND A
FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN "THE
SOCIALIST GDR AND THE CAPITALIST FRG." DUE TO THE
CORRECT LEADERSHIP OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE MILITARY
STRENGTH OF THE SOVIET BLOC, IMPERIALIST FORCES ARE
SEEN HAVING TO ADJUST TO NEW POWER REALITIES IN THE
WORLD--SUCH AS THE INCREASED STRENGTH OF SOCIALISM IN DEFENSE
OF PEACE--WHICH ALONE MAKE DETENTE POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH
MENTION IS MADE OF CONSERVATIVE TRENDS IN THE WEST
AND OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A "SUDDEN CHANGE" IN THE
WORLD SITUATION" (JAEHE WENDE", A FREQUENT THEME IN
RECENT SED SPEECHES), THE AUTHORS EXPRESS CONFIDENCE
THAT THE PROCESS OF DETENTE WILL CONTINUE.

5. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH LENGTHY EXHORTATIONS
TO HIGHER PRODUCTION IN ALL AREAS (THE CURRENT SLOGAN:
"FROM EVERY MARK, FROM EVERY HOUR OF WORKING TIME,
FROM EVERY GRAM OF MATERIAL A HIGHER UTILIZATION")
TO FULFILL THE DICTATES OF THE VIITH PARTY CONGRESS
AND TO ASSURE "A CONTINUALLY GREATER SATISFACTION OF THE
MATERIAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE THROUGH
CONSTANTLY MORE PRODUCTIVE WORK." SPECIAL EMPHASIS IS
PLACED ON THE VARIOUS WORKERS' COMPETITIONS IN HONOR
OF MAY 8 AND ON THE YOUTH OF THE GDR, A THEME ECHOED IN
A FOLLOW-UP REPORT IN SED PARTY ORGAN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND
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ON JANUARY 23 COVERING A SPEECH BY ERICH MUECKENBERGER,
POLITBURO MEMBER AND MEMBER OF THE PRESIDUM OF THE
COMMITTEE OF WHICH
STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPRESSING UPON A NEW
GENERATION THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HISTORICAL ROLE OF THE
SOVIET ARMY AND THE VICTORY OF MAY 8, 1945.

6. COMMENT: THE GDR HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED A SPECIFIC
SCHEDULE FOR THE MAY 8 CELEBRATIONS IN BERLIN AND HAS
MADE NO REFERENCE TO A POTENTIAL GDR MILITARY DISPLAY IN
BERLIN ON THAT DATE. GDR FONMIN OFFICIALS HAVE ALLUDED
TO THE MAY 8 ANNIVERSARY WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS
ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, EACH TIME PROBING THE
POSSIBILITY OF US PARTICIPATION, OFFICIAL OR UNOFFICIAL,
IN THE CELEBRATIONS, AND WE HAVE REMAINED NON-COMMITTAL

IT IS LIKELY, WE BELIEVE, THAT THE GDR WILL ISSUE
INFORMAL INVITATIONS TO PRIVATE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS
IN THE US TO PARTICIPATE IN CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE
CELEBRATIONS. A CASE IN POINT WOULD BE THE ANNUAL
OBSERVANCE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE MEETING OF SOVIET AND
AMERICAN TROOPS AT THE ELBE IN 1945. FONMIN OFFICIAL S
HAVE POINTED OUT TO US THAT AMERICAN VETERANS HAVE IN THE
RECENT PAST COME PRIVATELY TO THE GDR TO PARTICIPATE IN
JOINT CEREMONIES AT THE ELBE TO MARK THAT OCCASION,
AND MAY DO SO AGAIN THIS YEAR. WE WILL KEEP THE
DEPARTMENT AND ADDRESSEE POSTS INFORMED OF FURTHER
DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS MATTER. COOPER

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